



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/726,979	12/03/2003	Clifton Lind	988.1035	5074
35236	7590	03/31/2006	EXAMINER	
THE CULBERTSON GROUP, P.C. 1114 LOST CREEK BLVD. SUITE 420 AUSTIN, TX 78746			SHAH, MILAP	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3712	

DATE MAILED: 03/31/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/726,979	LIND ET AL.	
Examiner	Art Unit		
Milap Shah	3714		

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 December 2003.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 03 December 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/17/04 & 5/27/05.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

This is a supplemental action, which incorporates all substance that was in the original non-final rejection mailed January 11, 2006 to an incorrect mailing address. The situation evolved due to a "change of address" form submitted on 2/10/05 having an incorrect customer number and a corrected form being submitted on 2/11/05. Apparently, only the form submitted on 2/10/05 was processed, resulting in an incorrect customer number being attached to the serial number of the instant application. The issue has been resolved, and a new statutory period has been started from the date of this mailing.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-4, 7-11, & 14-16 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 3, 7-10, 12, 16-18, 21-22, 28, & 34-36 of U.S. Patent No. 6,802,776. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the subject matter of the conflicting claims is similar and, at times, almost identical in phrasing and terminology. The claims are not patentably distinct from one another because it would

have been obvious at the time of the invention to implement a similar bingo game with a plurality of game play requests associated with respective players and request multiple bingo cards in order to provide multiplayer bingo system with multiple ways to win. One would be motivated because a multiplayer bingo system allows for players to enjoy a bingo game in a traditional setting.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lind et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0111207).

Claims 1 & 8: Lind et al. disclose the same invention including a method comprising the steps of: (a) matching a first set of game designations with a set of bingo card representations to produce a matched card set, the matched card set including a number of game play records with each game play record corresponding to a different one of the bingo card representations and including a result indicator indicating a result of the match between the first set of game designations and the respective bingo card representation; (b) receiving a number of game play requests, each respective game play request being associated with a respective player and a respective bingo card representation from the set of bingo card representations; and (c) for each

game play request, assigning the respective player the game play record corresponding to the respective bingo card representation with which the respective player is associated (claim 1 & paragraph 0049). Lind et al. also disclose a program product stored on a computer readable medium, wherein the program product stores the program code to execute the above steps (claim 10).

Claim 2: Lind et al. disclose assigning game play records from the matched card set until a game winning player holds a game play record corresponding to a matched bingo card representation having a game ending pattern; and withdrawing (i.e. disregarding) the matched card set from play in response to the assignment of the game play record corresponding to the matched bingo card representation having the game ending pattern (claim 3).

Claim 3: Lind et al. disclose matching an additional game designation set with the set of bingo card representations to produce an additional matched card set, the additional matched card set including a number of respective additional game play records with each additional game play record corresponding to a different one of the bingo card representations and including a result indicator indicating a result of the match between the additional game designation set and the respective bingo card representation (claim 7, paragraph 0074, & paragraph 0079).

Claim 4: Lind et al. disclose receiving an additional game play request associated with a given player who has already been assigned a respective game play record from the matched card set, the additional game play request also being associated with a respective bingo card representation from the set of bingo card representations; and assigning the given player the additional game play record corresponding to the respective bingo card representation with which the given player is associated (claims 7-9).

Claim 5: Lind et al. disclose assigning additional game play records from the additional matched card set in response to a game play request which next follows a game play request for which is assigned a game ending game play record (paragraphs 0054 & 0055).

Claim 6: Lind et al. disclose assigning game play records from the matched card set for a set period of time and then assigning additional game play records from the additional matched card set after that set period of time (paragraphs 0054 & 0055).

Claim 7: Lind et al. disclose 7. The method of claim 1 further including the steps of: (a) matching a number of additional game designation sets with the set of bingo card representations to produce a number of additional matched card sets, each additional matched card set including a number of respective additional game play records with each additional game play record in a given one of the additional matched cards sets corresponding to a different one of the bingo card representations and including a result indicator indicating a result of the match between the respective additional game designation set and the respective bingo card representation; and (b) storing each additional matched card set so that respective additional game records are available for assignment in response to a respective game play request.

Claim 9: Lind et al. disclose game ending play monitoring program code for detecting when a player has been assigned a game play record corresponding to a matched bingo card representation having a game ending pattern; and matched card set switching program code for switching to a different matched card set when the winning play monitoring program code detects that a player has been assigned the game play record corresponding to the matched bingo card representation having the game ending pattern (claim 12).

Claim 10: Lind et al. disclose the matching program code matches an additional game designation set with the set of bingo card representations to produce an additional matched card

set, the additional matched card set including a number of respective additional game play records with each additional game play record corresponding to a different one of the bingo card representations and including a result indicator indicating a result of the match between the additional game designation set and the respective bingo card representation (claims 16 & 17).

Claim 11: Lind et al. disclose the game play assignment program code responds to a game play request from a given player who has been assigned a game play record from the matched card set by assigning the given player an additional game play record from the additional matched card set, the assigned additional game play record corresponding to the respective bingo card representation with which the given player is associated (claims 18, 28 & 34).

Claim 12: Lind et al. disclose the game play assignment program code assigns a respective additional game play record from the additional matched card set in response to a game play request which next follows a game play request for which is assigned a game ending play record from the matched card set (paragraphs 0054 & 0055).

Claim 13: Lind et al. disclose the game play assignment program code assigns game play records from the matched card set for a set period of time and then assigns additional game play records from the additional matched card set after that set period of time (paragraphs 0054 & 0055).

Claim 14: Lind et al. disclose a gaming system comprising: (a) a number of player stations, each player station for enabling a player to initiate a game play request and for displaying results of a game play upon receipt of a game play record, each game play request initiated by a player being associated with the initiating player and with a respective bingo card representation in a set of bingo card representations; (b) a central processing system for storing a set of game play records, each game play record corresponding to a respective bingo card representation which has been matched to a first set of game designations, the central processing system also for assigning a

respective game play record from the set of game play records to a player in response to a game play request initiated by the respective player at one of the player stations, the respective game play record assigned to the player being the game play record corresponding to the bingo card representation that is associated with that player; and (c) a communications system operatively connected to the central processing system and to each of the player stations for facilitating communications between the central processing system and each player station (claim 35, figure 3, & paragraphs 0030-0041 that describe figure 3).

Claim 15: Lind et al. disclose the central processing system stores a number of additional sets of game play records, each game play record in a respective additional set of game play records corresponding to a respective one of the bingo card representations which has been matched to an additional set of game designations; and the central processing system also assigns a respective game play record from one of the additional sets of game play records to a player in response to a game play request initiated by the respective player at a respective one of the player stations, the respective game play record assigned to the player from the additional set of game play records being the game play record in that additional set corresponding to the bingo card representation that is associated with that player (claim 36 & paragraphs 0030-0041).

Claim 16: Lind et al. disclose the matched card set includes a game ending game play record corresponding to a bingo card representation from the set of bingo card representations and wherein the central processing system withdraws the matched card set from play in response to the assignment of the game ending game play record (claims 2, 3, 21 & 22, note: the central processing system is the hardware that handles the withdrawing or disregarding of cards).

Claim 17: Lind et al. disclose a gaming floor component for directing a bingo card request to the central processing system in response to a bingo card request input entered for a respective

player, and wherein the central processing system responds to the bingo card request by associating a respective bingo card representation from the bingo card representation set with the respective player for whom the bingo card request input was entered (paragraphs 0010, 0042, & 0048).

Claim 18: Lind et al. disclose the gaming floor component comprises one of the player stations (paragraph 0048).

Claim 19: Lind et al. disclose a point of sale terminal distinct from the player stations and wherein the gaming floor component comprises the point of sale terminal (paragraph 0041).

Claim 20: Lind et al. disclose the central processing system is also for maintaining a database correlating each of a number of respective players to one or more bingo card representations with which the respective player is associated (paragraphs 0037-0039).

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Lind et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,802,776).

The applied reference has a common inventor with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) might be overcome either by a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor(s) of this application and is thus not the invention "by another," or by an appropriate showing under 37 CFR 1.131.

Claims 1 & 8: Lind et al. disclose the same invention including a method comprising the steps of: (a) matching a first set of game designations with a set of bingo card representations to produce a matched card set, the matched card set including a number of game play records with each game play record corresponding to a different one of the bingo card representations and

including a result indicator indicating a result of the match between the first set of game designations and the respective bingo card representation; (b) receiving a number of game play requests, each respective game play request being associated with a respective player and a respective bingo card representation from the set of bingo card representations; and (c) for each game play request, assigning the respective player the game play record corresponding to the respective bingo card representation with which the respective player is associated (claim 1 & column 9, lines 42-60). Lind et al. also disclose a program product stored on a computer readable medium, wherein the program product stores the program code to execute the above steps (claim 10).

Claim 2: Lind et al. disclose assigning game play records from the matched card set until a game winning player holds a game play record corresponding to a matched bingo card representation having a game ending pattern; and withdrawing (i.e. disregarding) the matched card set from play in response to the assignment of the game play record corresponding to the matched bingo card representation having the game ending pattern (claim 3).

Claim 3: Lind et al. disclose matching an additional game designation set with the set of bingo card representations to produce an additional matched card set, the additional matched card set including a number of respective additional game play records with each additional game play record corresponding to a different one of the bingo card representations and including a result indicator indicating a result of the match between the additional game designation set and the respective bingo card representation (claim 7, column 17, lines 6-15, & column 18, lines 33-49).

Claim 4: Lind et al. disclose receiving an additional game play request associated with a given player who has already been assigned a respective game play record from the matched card set, the additional game play request also being associated with a respective bingo card representation

from the set of bingo card representations; and assigning the given player the additional game play record corresponding to the respective bingo card representation with which the given player is associated (claims 7-9).

Claim 5: Lind et al. disclose assigning additional game play records from the additional matched card set in response to a game play request which next follows a game play request for which is assigned a game ending game play record (column 10, line 53 – column 11, line 30).

Claim 6: Lind et al. disclose assigning game play records from the matched card set for a set period of time and then assigning additional game play records from the additional matched card set after that set period of time (column 10, line 53 – column 11, line 30).

Claim 7: Lind et al. disclose 7. The method of claim 1 further including the steps of: (a) matching a number of additional game designation sets with the set of bingo card representations to produce a number of additional matched card sets, each additional matched card set including a number of respective additional game play records with each additional game play record in a given one of the additional matched cards sets corresponding to a different one of the bingo card representations and including a result indicator indicating a result of the match between the respective additional game designation set and the respective bingo card representation; and (b) storing each additional matched card set so that respective additional game records are available for assignment in response to a respective game play request.

Claim 9: Lind et al. disclose game ending play monitoring program code for detecting when a player has been assigned a game play record corresponding to a matched bingo card representation having a game ending pattern; and matched card set switching program code for switching to a different matched card set when the winning play monitoring program code

detects that a player has been assigned the game play record corresponding to the matched bingo card representation having the game ending pattern (claim 12).

Claim 10: Lind et al. disclose the matching program code matches an additional game designation set with the set of bingo card representations to produce an additional matched card set, the additional matched card set including a number of respective additional game play records with each additional game play record corresponding to a different one of the bingo card representations and including a result indicator indicating a result of the match between the additional game designation set and the respective bingo card representation (claims 16 & 17).

Claim 11: Lind et al. disclose the game play assignment program code responds to a game play request from a given player who has been assigned a game play record from the matched card set by assigning the given player an additional game play record from the additional matched card set, the assigned additional game play record corresponding to the respective bingo card representation with which the given player is associated (claims 18, 28 & 34).

Claim 12: Lind et al. disclose the game play assignment program code assigns a respective additional game play record from the additional matched card set in response to a game play request which next follows a game play request for which is assigned a game ending play record from the matched card set (column 10, line 53 – column 11, line 30).

Claim 13: Lind et al. disclose the game play assignment program code assigns game play records from the matched card set for a set period of time and then assigns additional game play records from the additional matched card set after that set period of time (column 10, line 53 – column 11, line 30).

Claim 14: Lind et al. disclose a gaming system comprising: (a) a number of player stations, each player station for enabling a player to initiate a game play request and for displaying results of a

game play upon receipt of a game play record, each game play request initiated by a player being associated with the initiating player and with a respective bingo card representation in a set of bingo card representations; (b) a central processing system for storing a set of game play records, each game play record corresponding to a respective bingo card representation which has been matched to a first set of game designations, the central processing system also for assigning a respective game play record from the set of game play records to a player in response to a game play request initiated by the respective player at one of the player stations, the respective game play record assigned to the player being the game play record corresponding to the bingo card representation that is associated with that player; and (c) a communications system operatively connected to the central processing system and to each of the player stations for facilitating communications between the central processing system and each player station (claim 35, figure 3, & column 5, line 44 – column 7, line 64 which describe figure 3).

Claim 15: Lind et al. disclose the central processing system stores a number of additional sets of game play records, each game play record in a respective additional set of game play records corresponding to a respective one of the bingo card representations which has been matched to an additional set of game designations; and the central processing system also assigns a respective game play record from one of the additional sets of game play records to a player in response to a game play request initiated by the respective player at a respective one of the player stations, the respective game play record assigned to the player from the additional set of game play records being the game play record in that additional set corresponding to the bingo card representation that is associated with that player (claim 36 & column 5, line 44 – column 7, line 64).

Claim 16: Lind et al. disclose the matched card set includes a game ending game play record corresponding to a bingo card representation from the set of bingo card representations and

wherein the central processing system withdraws the matched card set from play in response to the assignment of the game ending game play record (claims 2, 3, 21 & 22, note: the central processing system is the hardware that handles the withdrawing or disregarding of cards).

Claim 17: Lind et al. disclose a gaming floor component for directing a bingo card request to the central processing system in response to a bingo card request input entered for a respective player, and wherein the central processing system responds to the bingo card request by associating a respective bingo card representation from the bingo card representation set with the respective player for whom the bingo card request input was entered (column 3, lines 17-39, column 7, line 65 – column 8, line 11, & column 9, lines 20-40).

Claim 18: Lind et al. disclose the gaming floor component comprises one of the player stations (column 9, lines 20-40).

Claim 19: Lind et al. disclose a point of sale terminal distinct from the player stations and wherein the gaming floor component comprises the point of sale terminal (column 7, lines 54-64).

Claim 20: Lind et al. disclose the central processing system is also for maintaining a database correlating each of a number of respective players to one or more bingo card representations with which the respective player is associated (column 7, lines 10-42).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Applicability</u>
Fioretti	U.S. Patent No. 5,351,970	Methods & apparatus for playing bingo over a wide geographic area.
Goldfarb	U.S. Patent No. 5,472,209	Method of playing a game of chance with a universal bingo card at the game site or locations remote from the game site.
Falciglia	U.S. Patent No. 5,647,798	Apparatus for playing bingo on a slot machine.
Khaldakar	U.S. Patent No. 5,687,971	Bingo game management method & system
Matsumoto et al.	U.S. Patent No. 5,755,619	Bingo game machine.
Tawil	U.S. Patent No. 5,951,396	Real-time monitoring and registering of bingo games
Santini, Jr.	U.S. Patent No. 6,257,980	Method & apparatus for identifying a winner in a bingo game.
Lind et al.	U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0132661	Similar Lind et al. application for a bingo-type game

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Milap Shah whose telephone number is (571) 272-1723. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F: 9:30AM-6:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's acting supervisor, Scott Jones can be reached on (571) 272-4438. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

RE:SCOTT JONES
SEARCHED
SERIALIZED
INDEXED
MAILED

M.B.S.

